



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

selected—Pullman, Gary, Norwood, Granite City, Fairfield, etc. These are briefly compared with English industrial suburbs.

The book is a clear, human study of the domination of business and property rights over the social rights in these new "satellites" thrown off from the city. It should be read by all interested in city-planning, housing, and the growth of suburbs. Captains of industry should read this book.

SCOTT E. W. BEDFORD

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Social Heredity and Social Evolution. The Other Side of Eugenics.

By HERBERT WILLIAM CONN. New York. Abingdon Press, 1914. Pp. vi+348.

This is an unusual book for a biologist to write (the author is professor of biology in Wesleyan University), for it argues that civilization rests primarily upon acquired rather than upon inherited characters. Briefly, the central arguments of the book are that man's inherited equipment, consisting of his organic structure and activity tendencies or dispositions (instincts) which are predetermined in this inherited structure (pp. 281-82), does not raise him above the animal plane; while human civilization is the result of an ages-long process of heaping up and socially transmitting wealth and technique—acquired characters. "Human civilization is not present in the human ovum, nor is it present in the nervous system of the newly born infant" (p. 286). With the advent of the human animal there comes a new goal into the world of life (p. 310). "Social advance rather than organic advance has become the goal of evolution" (p. 322). The method of securing this advance has also changed from natural selection, operating among animals, to social selection, which dominates among men (p. 342). In fact, man often has to rely upon his acquired social traits to enable him to overcome some of his strongest animal instincts, so greatly has the direction and content of his evolution changed (p. 331).

If this interesting work were confined to the elaboration and support of this argument most sociologists would probably find themselves in hearty accord, for they have arrived at these conclusions before the biologists. But the secondary arguments of the book are not so free from objection, for in developing these the author in large degree weakens or even contradicts his main contention. His first difficulty arises from his attempt to account for the new or "social heredity" factor in evolution. Apparently he does not regard man's more highly developed

nervous system with its greater plasticity, his hand development, his upright position, and his vocal equipment as sufficient in themselves to account for the new method of advance, though he takes account of all these factors (pp. 289 and 335). Man's social superiority is due to his conscience or moral sense, he says, and this he thinks is a spontaneous variation (pp. 118-19) which reduces itself in origin to the "altruistic instinct," "which leads to the willingness of the individual to sacrifice his own interests" to those of society (p. 339). Social life, guided by this instinctive moral sense (p. 292), is further aided by two other helpful instincts, "the instinct to obey authority" (p. 122) and the "social instinct" which causes people to take pleasure in contacts. Though he has defined instincts as merely the "outward expressions of the structure of the nervous system" (p. 282), he does not explain how this moral attitude of altruism, which involves one neural mechanism in one act and another in a different act, could be inherited as an instinct or unit character in accordance with his own definition of instinct. Thus, after all, he reduces the fundamental determining fact of "social evolution" back to a trait in organic inheritance which, even if genuine, must have been of very doubtful value in the Darwinian struggle for survival. "Society is a superstructure, built by social inheritance upon a foundation laid by organic inheritance" (p. 300). Reasoning in this way he finds it necessary to distinguish between moral sense, or the "impulse to do the right," and moral codes or the concrete content of moral conduct and choice, holding that the former is instinctive and prior while the latter is acquired from custom, experience, and education (pp. 293, 295-96) and embodies the main achievement of civilization (pp. 288 ff.). But he fails to make clear how the native "impulse to do the right"—necessarily a highly abstract and generalized attitude as we apprehend it in the large, or a very concrete valuation when we are conscious of it as the moral measure of a specific act—could either appear independently of moral experience or could come prior to the acts upon which it constitutes evaluations. This difficulty, which he gives no sign of recognizing, would seem to destroy his theory of an innate or inherited sense of right. Why he should accept an undemonstrated biological hypothesis of conscience (thus blocking his own attempt to escape from biological determinism) when the experience or habit explanation of conscience is so much simpler and has the weight of psychological and sociological observations behind it may be explained in part (but not wholly) by his failure to distinguish between instinct and acquired habit, a confusion which is apparent on many pages (especially pp. 217, 282, 285, and 330).

His theory of the function and origin of conscience also leads him to a rather antiquated and superficial emphasis upon the conflict between egoism and altruism (pp. 249, 265). He thinks that civilization is dependent upon individuals sacrificing their own interests to those of others, an act which he conceives of as never dictated by intelligence but by religion (p. 343), which at times he appears to identify with the ethical nature and at other times with the fear of future punishment. "Logic alone never leads one to follow conscience" (p. 277). To religion he gives a dominant place in the development of the future (p. 343). His confusion on these points might have been cleared up in part by reconciling two of his own statements. One of these might be called his prime law of civilization: "Ethics sacrifices both the individual to society, and the present to the future" (p. 262). The other is, "The evident drift of social evolution is to give to each individual a larger share in the good things of this world" (p. 341). Evidently a reconciliation of these two statements must be based upon an appreciation of the mutual advantages of intelligent co-operation rather than upon the old pleasure-pain quantity theory implied in "altruism versus egoism."

Space is lacking for more than the mention of some of the other secondary traits of the book which will serve to indicate its general qualities. The author constantly speaks of the family as the primal group, and traces much of social evolution back to it (pp. 84, 141-42). He develops a superficial contrast between "patriarchal" or oriental and "communal" or occidental types of social organization (p. 155), which would seem to rest upon instinctive race traits rather than upon differences of economic and cultural environment. The Aryan race, he thinks, embodies most perfectly the communal type (p. 196). He has some difficulty in reconciling our tendency toward increasing social organization and control with liberty, but finally comes out on the side of organization and control without giving a wholly consistent explanation. Above all, the fact that social evolution is due to the accumulation and social transmission of acquired characters, and is therefore infinitely more rapid than slow-moving organic evolution, causes him to be very optimistic. "The future is full of hope," he says (p. 344). But he does not mention the fact that our civilization is largely dependent for the accumulation of its techniques upon our power and structural resources and that the conservation movement has not yet been able to do much to check their waste. Indeed, he does not make any considerable use of the influence of the material environment in his account of social evolution; it appears to have escaped him. In spite of the subtitle of the book he

has almost as little to say of eugenics. While he does not find eugenic control of evolution valueless, he holds that "under the complex conditions of society the prospects of improving the race along these lines is not very great" (p. 326), because social evolution is based primarily upon acquired characters.

It should be repeated that the main criticisms of this book fall upon the secondary arguments, though these are by no means always faulty. The main contention appears to be sound and in agreement with the best sociological thinking of the day. It is regrettable that the value of this very readable book should be so greatly diminished by lack of psychological and anthropogeographical information and sometimes by a failure to have analyzed arguments completely. But if the book had no other value it still would mark a distinct advance in the history of one field of thought, for it is the advance guard of an inevitable tendency of the biologists to venture beyond the study of the invertebrates and to become acquainted with the facts and methods of social evolution. And because of this significance it has seemed worth while to give so much space to an analysis of its arguments.

L. L. BERNARD

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI